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Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEGUCI 02586 012213Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
IO-13 AID-05 ACDA-12 OMB-01 HA-05 TRSE-00 /104 W
----------041575 021325Z /41
R 012125Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 525
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
USCINCSO QUARRY HTS CZ

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EO 11652 N/A
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, MPOL, HO
SUBJECT: ELECTIONS SET FOR APRIL, 1980, AS ELECTORAL LAW AMENDED

REF: (A) TEGUCIGALPA 308 (NOTAL), (B) TEGUCIGALPA 2436
(DTG 231357Z MAY 78), (C) TEGUCIGALPA 2491 (DTG 251932Z MAY 78)

1. COMMUNIQUE RELEASED BY OFFICE OF CHIEF OF STATE JUNE 1 AND READ ON NATIONWIDE RADIO, ANNOUNCED AMENDMENTS TO ELECTORAL LAWS WHICH ELIMINATE NATIONAL REGISTER OF PERSONS AND SET APRIL 20, 1980, AS DATE FOR ELECTIONS TO CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY. MAY 31 CABINET DECREE HAS NOT YET BEEN PUBLISHED, BUT EMBOFF SHOWN DRAFT COPY WHICH ABROGATES AND REPLACES A NUMBER OF ARTICLES IN ELECTORAL LAW (REF A). DECREE, WHEN AVAILABLE, AND COMMUNIQUE WILL BE POUCHED ARA/CEN/H.

2. IN ADDITION TO SETTING ELECTORAL DATES, WHICH FORMERLY WAS TO HAVE BEEN DONE BY NATIONAL ELECTORAL TRIBUNAL, THE DECREE CREATES AN "ELECTORAL IDENTIFICATION CARD" TO BE ISSUED BY LOCAL
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PAGE 02 TEGUCI 02586 012213Z

ELECTORAL TRIBUNALS. THIS CARD WILL BE USED IN PREPARATION OF ELECTORAL CENSUS (I.E. VOTER REGISTRATION). TIMETABLE FOR ELECTIONS IS ESTABLISHED AS FOLLOWS:

--AUGUST 15, 1978 - PERIOD OPENS DURING WHICH CITIZENS CAN OBTAIN ELECTORAL CARDS, CLOSING AUGUST 30, 1979.

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

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--SEPTEMBER, 1979 - LOCAL ELECTORAL TRIBUNALS WILL REVISE NATIONAL ELECTORAL CENSUS TO CORRECT ERRORS.

--OCTOBER, 1979 - LOCAL ELECTORAL TRIBUNALS WILL PUT CENSUS LIST IN A PUBLIC PLACE AND URGE CITIZENS TO VERIFY THAT DATA IS CORRECT.

--NOVEMBER, 1979 - LOCAL ELECTORAL TRIBUNALS WILL RESOLVE IN PUBLIC SESSIONS THOSE PROBLEMS THAT HAVE ARISEN.

--DECEMBER 1, 1979 - ELECTIONS CONVOKED.

--APRIL 20, 1980 - ELECTIONS HELD.

--JULY 20, 1980 - CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY MEETS.

3. COMMENT: THE CHANGES IN THE ELECTORAL LAW WERE MADE, ACCORDING TO COMMUNIQUE, IN ORDER TO ACCELERATE THE ELECTORAL PROCESS. SETTING THE DATE, EVEN THOUGH A LONG WAY OFF, WILL PROBABLY MUTE THE ARGUMENT THAT HAS BEEN GOING ON OVER WHEN WLECTIONS SHOULD BE HELD. LACK OF A SPECIFIC DATE WAS THE MAJOR COMPLAINT MADE BY THE POLITICAL PARTIES WHEN THE ELECTORAL LAW WAS FIRST PUBLISHED. WIDESPREAD PUBLIC COMMENT CAN BE EXPECTED ONCE THE DECREE ITSELF IF PUBLISHED. JARAMILLO

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